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CIA cover exposed in Ghana

By Sam Meddis
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A CIA clerk and a relative of Ghana's leader were charged Thursday with espionage in a scheme the FBI says blew the CIA's cover in the troubled African nation.

CIA clerk Sharon M. Scranage, 29, of King George, Va., and Michael Agbotui Soussoudis, 39, a citizen of Ghana, face life in prison, FBI Director William H. Webster said.

An FBI affidavit said the spying began in 1983 when Scranage, then with the CIA for seven years, was assigned to Accra, Ghana. Authorities believe the two became lovers.

John K. Greaney of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers said the use of sex is a classic espionage-recruitment technique: "A 'honey trap,' is what the Soviets call it."

Scranage, a divorcee who earns \$22,000 a year, admitted she gave Soussoudis the names of CIA agents and confidential informants in Ghana, along with a CIA report on Ghanaian leader Jerry Rawlings' efforts to buy Libyan weapons, the affidavit said. Soussoudis is believed to be Rawlings' nephew.

The CIA recalled agents from Ghana after uncovering the spying, authorities said.

Soussoudis was arrested Wednesday, Scranage Thursday — both in northern Virginia. Scranage is the fourth CIA employee charged with spying against the United States.

In another case, a federal judge in Baltimore Thursday refused to set bail for Navy Seaman Michael Walker, 22, accused of being part of a four-man spy team headed by his father John Walker and including his uncle Arthur Walker.

In Norfolk, Va., today, Arthur Walker's lawyers will argue in closed court that his admissions to the FBI shouldn't be used as evidence.